WASHINGTON STATE INFANT TODDLER EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM
CHILD OUTCOMES
AND
THE CHILD OUTCOMES SUMMARY FORM (COSF) PROCESS

Frequently Asked Questions

❖ **CONCERNING CHILD AND FAMILY OUTCOMES**

1. *What are the child and family outcomes?*
   Child Outcomes:
   - Children have positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships)
   - Children acquire and use knowledge and skills (including early language/communication and {early literacy})
   - Children use appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

   Family Outcomes:
   - Percent of parents/families participating in Part C who report that Early Intervention helped the family
     -know their rights
     -effectively communicate their children's needs
     -help their children develop and learn.

   Additional Family Outcomes that will be measured using the Early Childhood Outcome Center Family Survey:
   - Understand their child's strengths, abilities and special needs
   - Access desired services, programs, and activities in their communities

   For national information about the COSF and resources available on the Early Childhood Outcome Website, please visit: http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~eco/. For Washington State information, please visit: http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/iteip.

2. *How is Washington going to measure parent/family outcomes?*
   We will use the Early Childhood Outcomes Center Family Survey. National and state survey forms can be obtained from the respective web addresses listed previously. ITEIP plans to ask families to complete the survey at time of annual IFSPs and when they transition from the program.

3. *How are child outcomes being summarized in Washington State?*
   We will use the Early Childhood Outcomes Center Child Outcome Summary Form. Existing information about each child's functioning and abilities will be aligned using the form to guide documentation of skills. Information recorded in the ITEIP Data Management System will be used in this process. Teams will work to reach agreement on skills and functions within the IFSP team process.

4. *When do I complete the COSF?*
   At least upon entry into ITEIP, and when transitioning out of early intervention. Teams may decide to complete a new COSF process to document substantial changes in the child's skills

in addition to these required points in service, at any time. If so, they must be marked to document they are in addition to entry or exit summaries.

5. *How do I integrate the COSF process into the IFSP meeting?*
Based on input from pilot sites, teams felt it was easier to complete the COSF process at the beginning of IFSP meetings rather than the end.

6. *What if the child only exhibits delays in one outcome area?*
Functional skills in one outcome area may impact other outcome areas (i.e. articulation issues may influence functional behaviors across all three outcome areas.) It is important to document skills in at least the three areas.

❖ **CONCERNING THE COSF PROCESS**

1. *What children should have child outcome measurements?*
All children, eligible for ITEIP, entering and exiting the state program, except children who enroll at the age of 31 months or older, must have outcome summaries completed. There should only be one entry and one exit summary completed per child/family. Teams may use the summary form and process more often, but if doing so, should clearly document extra summaries to ensure state entry and exit summaries can accurately reflect aggregate reporting needs.

2. *When and how long should a child be in ITEIP before his/her skills are measured?*
Initial child outcome measures should occur upon family and child's <u>entry</u> and be completed as part of the initial IFSP. Measurement summaries may occur throughout the time of the child and their family's participation. However, any outcome measurement summaries completed between entry and exit will not be part of the aggregate data reported to OSEP for entry or exits.

Measurement must also occur as the child is <u>exiting</u> the state ITEIP and be conducted as part of the transition planning process. The child must be in service for at least six month before child outcome progress summaries can be collected. At this time, Washington will not include summaries of progress for children in the state program less then six months.

3. *How do we handle children served by more than one early intervention program or service provider?*
The FRC assigned at the <u>time of entry</u> into Washington State ITEIP, facilitates the team outcome measurement summary process and submits data into the data management system. This documentation may be printed for the child/family paper record. All IFSP team members, including parents/families, participate in the skill measurement discussion. Some teams may elect to only enter minimum summary information into the data management system, in which case they must maintain a comprehensive copy in the paper record.

4. *For children born prematurely, do we compare to a typical child of the same chronological age, or of the same corrected age?*
Yes, compare to a typical child the same chronological age; Washington State ITEIP does not adjust age for children born prematurely.

5. *If we know a child is exiting the local program before age three, should we complete another COSF process at the exit meeting? Does this depend on how recently the child's development and skills were documented?*
Complete a COSF process at the last team meeting with the family, no matter when a previous summary was done, unless the child/family are exiting before being in the program for at least six months. Information is needed from all members of the IFSP team to determine exiting functional skill levels. Note: if in service less than six months, we will need to note the child was in the program less then six months so an exit summary was not completed. This should be recorded in Progress Notes of the ITEIP Data Management System.

6. *If a child enters at same peer level and exits at same peer level, would the 1, 2, and 3b question need to be completed?*
Yes, you would need to answer the progress questions. Since a child cannot remain at a level comparable to peers without making some sort of progress, the answer to those questions would always be yes.

7. *Who is the "team'?*
The team consists of parents/family members, and professionals involved in evaluations, assessments, and providing services to the child/family. Professionals who are licensed to interpret and discuss evaluation and assessment data with parents/teams are critical members for discussions and reaching consensus of the child's skills and developmental status. The Family Resources Coordinator (FRC), assigned to the family/child, both, at the time of entry and at the time of exit from the state program, should facilitate the team meeting and process. Families and children often move around so the summary/data will be maintained in the electronic system and also in paper files for reference as needed if teams are electing to only enter minimum summary details in the electronic system.

❖ **DEFINITIONS OF CHILD OUTCOME SUMMARIES**
1. *What are "foundational" and "immediate foundational skills"?*
An important developmental concept for understanding how to use the Child Outcomes Summary Form is the concept of foundational skills. Some of the skills and behaviors that develop early serve as the foundation for later skills and behavior. Or expressed another way, later skills build on earlier skills in predictable ways. Teachers, therapists, and parents can use the earlier skills to help children move to the next higher level of functioning developmentally. We refer to these earlier skills that serve as the base and are conceptually linked to the later skills, as "**foundational skills**." For example, children play along side one another before they interact in play. Development in the early childhood years proceeds through several levels of foundational skills with skills and behavior becoming more complex and more proficient as children get older. All skills that lead to higher levels of functional abilities are foundational skills, however, the set of skills and behavior that occur developmentally *just prior* to age-expected functioning can be described as the **immediate foundational skills** in that they are the most recent set of foundational skills that children master and move beyond.

A child whose functioning is like that of a younger child is probably showing **immediate foundational skills.** Her functioning does not meet age expectations, but she demonstrates skills and behaviors that occur developmentally just prior to age expected functioning and are the basis *on which to build* age-expected functioning.

A child whose functioning might be described as like that of a MUCH younger child does not meet age expectations, nor does she demonstrate skills and behaviors on which to build age-expected functioning. She has foundational skills, but not yet at an **immediate foundational** level.

See also the document posted on the ITEIP Website titled: Age-Expected and Immediate Foundational Skills and the Child Outcome Summary Form Seven Point Skill Summary

❖ **CONCERNING THE CHILD OUTCOME SUMMARY RESULTS**

1. *Can the form be modified?*
   No, this is a form that must be used consistently statewide. The national form has been modified, for Washington, based on input from pilot sites and national consultants. One form is critical so that the state has consistent data for baselines and progress tracking.

2. *Could there be different forms for different children – for children with developmental delays of various severity or children at risk, for example?*
   No, we can not do this. The data recorded, using different forms, would not be consistent or allow aggregate information to be summarized. It is critical to have information collected that can be summarized in the same way for all child outcome measurements.

3. *Why was the Child Outcome Summary Form designed and why did Washington decide on it to be the states process?*
   There is no existing assessment based on the three child outcomes. The Child Outcomes Summary Form affords a method for providers to summarize information collected from multiple sources to address the three child outcomes. The COSF process is intended to facilitate state and local reporting and program improvement, as well as to meet federal reporting requirements. The COSF process is used to determine to what extent a child's functioning on each outcome is appropriate given his or her age, and whether that child made progress toward age appropriate behavior. Teams will determine individual child developmental status through discussion of the child's functional skills and behaviors across a variety of settings and situations, and of child development expectations. ITEIP worked with a stakeholder workgroup and State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) to determine this was really the only process available at this time to fully meet data requirements.

4. *What do I record on COSF forms in the 'Persons involved in deciding the outcome skills summary' section?*
   Record all members of the team who were physically present during the IFSP meeting in which the child outcome summaries were discussed and determined.

5. *What do I record on COSF forms in the 'Samples/Examples of Relevant Results' boxes?*
   Record functional skills for the child that demonstrate individual abilities in each of the three outcome areas. Use of clear and positive statements and examples is necessary to summarize skills that demonstrate the child's functional skills and level of development. Please reference the following document for examples of how to summarize samples/examples of relevant results: ITEIP Website link to the COSF Guidance document.

6. *The box for samples/examples of relevant results (next to the "a" question) isn't big enough to include all the child can do.*
   The box allows the IFSP team to summarize progress the child is making, especially if the child is not "catching up" to typical functioning or is very atypical (e.g. in the "Emerging" or "Not Yet" categories in the "b" question.) Detailed information on child progress should be written into the IFSP progress notes. There is no requirement to enter a lot of examples of progress. This should be brief statements or skill progress point's describing progress.

7. *What do I record in the 'b' boxes on the child outcomes measurement summary forms?*
   (If Question 2a has been answered previously):
   Has the child shown _any_ new skills or behaviors related to acquiring and using knowledge and skills since the last outcomes summary? *(Select one)*

Yes	→	Describe progress:
No	→	

8. *Do I record information from the Family Statement on the COSF?*
   To summarize skills and report progress, it is important to use all existing evaluation, assessment, observation, and parental and professional reports, or any information recorded in the ITEIP Data Management System. Parents are key informants and know how their child does when others are not around. Parent information must be included in this process.

❖ **CONCERNING THE TEAM PROCESS**

1. *What do I do if a member of the IFSP team does not attend the scheduled/confirmed IFSP meeting?*
   The IFSP meeting must include, at least, the parent, FRC, and the qualified professionals from disciplines needed to interpret results of the evaluation, assessments, and other means of information documentation. The IFSP meeting must be scheduled to ensure appropriate attendance or participation in the team process. If qualified professionals are not available to be at the meeting, the meeting is not an IFSP meeting.

2. *What should providers do if there is disagreement among team members as to what rating category to assign to a child on one of the outcomes?*
   In order to minimize disagreements, we suggest teams start by talking about the functional outcome and the various ways, settings, and situations in which the child demonstrates skills and behaviors related to the outcome. The team should refer back to the progress notes, ongoing assessments, and observations, and add new information to the COSF and IFSP to describe the child's progress toward each outcome. At the same time, it is recommended that team members who are most familiar with child development provide examples of skills or

behaviors typical of a child the same age and those typical of a younger child. We also suggest providers ask parents whether they know other children the same age as their child (cousins, etc.), without delays, and what they see those children doing in the outcome area.

Focus on how the child is doing at the time. If one person feels a very different skill discussion is appropriate, the FRC/facilitator should ask that person to describe the child's behaviors or skills and in what settings they are seen, which led them to their recommendation. The person who is facilitating the meeting should summarize what has been said and suggest the team work for consensus, reading the description of the skill summary category.

Write this evidence in the COSF, too. Then look at all the evidence together. Through this discussion, the team may come to a closer agreement. If the disagreement is only between two adjacent categories, the team may agree to average the ratings or choose one or the other. The team does need to reach agreement. In some cases the team may not reach total agreement. If team members disagree between adjacent categories, the team can choose any method they like to pick which one to check: for instance, "majority rules" or the team may agree to average the ratings.

3. *Some children may never show typical behavior/skills. Due to their disability, disease or condition, their behavior will remain far below typical or even regress. How can the team approach the Child Outcome Summary Process without upsetting the parent?*
If the team has just finished reviewing the assessment results and writing the samples/examples of relevant results, the parent is already thinking about their child's level of development. Be sure the parent/family is part of the information sharing. Ask the parent to share positive skills they see even if not where his cousin, neighbor, or friend is at. Assist in recognizing and documenting all progress.

4. *Do we have to complete an entire Child Outcomes Summary Form process for children who are only eligible for speech or language services?*
Yes, summary information is needed for each of the three child outcomes. Functional skills in one outcome area may overlap with skills and outcomes in other outcome areas (i.e. articulation issues may influence functional behaviors across all three outcome areas.)

5. *What do I do if there is only a single contracted service provider who serves the child/family and no one else at my location has recently interacted with the child/family?*
Comprehensive evaluations and assessments are required to be part of the IFSP process, whether doing outcome summaries or not. When resources are not available in the area, FRCs and Local Lead Agencies must have methods to bring in team members from other areas to participate in the process until local resources can be recruited. Obtain the information from all professionals and family members who have knowledge of the child's functioning across situations and settings.

❖ **CONCERNING RELATIONSHIP OF CHILD OUTCOMES TO OTHER ASSESSMENTS**
1. *How is the COSF summary process different from standardized assessment results (e.g. BDI, HELP, AEPS, etc.)?*

The purpose differs: Assessments document child development in the five developmental domains in detail, so IFSPs can be developed.

Child outcome summary discussions should enhance assessment information. This process compares child's behavior and skills in the three <u>functional</u> outcomes across multiple situations and settings, to a typical child. Other standardized assessments compare a sample of the child's behavior and skills in each of the five domains to typical development.

2. *Should I record results of ongoing assessments on the COSF?*
   Yes. Use current assessment results for the time the summary is being done. Ensure that there are concrete examples of children's functional skills, at the time of the meeting, in the supporting evidence tables for each outcome. Standard scores and percentages are not relevant information for this outcomes measurement summary purpose as they do not state skills in functional terms. Age ranges are relevant (e.g., eating skills 12-15 months with examples of skills).

3. *For a child exiting early intervention and moving into 619 preschool, can the exit COSF be used as an intake measurement for 619?*
   The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) 619 preschool program is using the ECO Child Outcomes Summary process as well. There is a slightly different process however and timelines many differ as well. IFSP and IEP teams must work together to coordinate ITEIP exit data with three to five preschool special education entry processes. We hope to see collaborative strategies on how to do the entry and exit process as comprehensively as possible while minimizing the need for multiple meetings and avoiding duplication of discussions for parents, families and team members.

❖ **CONCERNING RELATIONSHIP TO IFSP**

1. *Will every child be required to have an IFSP outcome related to one or more of the three outcome measurement areas?*
   No. IFSP outcomes and criteria should still reflect the IFSP team members' priorities of what is most important for the family and child, and what the next steps are in addressing those important areas. IFSP teams will want to consider the three outcomes while discussing and prioritizing what functional skills and behaviors are important to achieve within the next year.

2. *At what point in the IFSP meeting will the outcome summary occur?*
   Pilot teams felt completing the COSF process at the beginning of IFSP meetings was most effective. The discussions should be integrated into team meetings and be completed prior to finalizing the IFSP and prior to the child leaving the state ITEIP.

❖ **CONCERNING STAFF OVERLOAD**

1. *Can we use a single, ongoing assessment to report outcome data?*
   Currently, no single standardized assessment directly addresses the three functional outcome areas and compares the child to a typically developing child in those areas. OSEP requires us to report data on child progress in the three outcomes. The Early Childhood Outcome Center was contracted with by OSEP to provide a method to document child and family outcomes.

The Child Outcomes Summary Form and process provides a method to summarize all available information about a child's functioning (e.g. evaluations, assessments, and observations) for roll up discussion and documentation on the forms.

❖ **CONCERNING INTERPRETATION OF THE CHILD OUTCOME DATA**

1. How will outcome data for children and families be used?
Summary results of child and family outcome data will be used to:
   a. Improve local services and programs for children and families in Washington State. Summary reports can be used on an ongoing basis to review outcome data.
   b. Provide the State with aggregate results to inform policy and technical assistance. Local and state summary data is required to be reported to the federal government, state agency, Governor, and the public in aggregate reports and on an annual basis.
   c. Inform federal and state policy and decision-making after several years of data collection.

2. Will the state/OSEP be looking at length of time the child is served to explain benefit or lack of benefit? How will the measurement system include how much the child/family actually participated in services?
OSEP has not requested any data on length of enrollment or participation in services. In ITEIP, we are collecting the date of each measurement. The range from first to last date of measurement will approximate the duration of enrollment. All children entering will have their skills summarized in the three areas. Children in service six months or more will have an exit summary, which include progress data as well.

3. If OSEP sees poor child outcomes, will they then take away dollars from programs when the problem may be bigger than a program can effect (e.g. a systems problem, a societal problem, etc.)?
It is not yet known how OSEP will use the aggregate outcomes data. We are discussing how to report the data to help policy makers understand the complexity which underlies benefits achieved. It will be critical to carefully analyze data and include details relating to data that will aid individuals reading reports to have information that helps explains aggregate summaries and data.

4. Will OSEP understand the kinds of intense, complex needs families have?
Qualitative descriptions will enhance understanding of the summary data and define the population of infants, toddlers, and their families served throughout the state and country for all of us.

❖ **CONCERNING DATA SUBMISSION**

1. Where will outcome summary data go?
ITEIP is modifying the existing data management system so information from the Child Outcomes Summary Form can be entered into the enhanced Washington ITEIP Data Management System. Data will be entered at the local service level, and transmitted electronically to the ITEIP/DSHS. Data will be combined into a report for OSEP through the system for state and local aggregate data reporting.

2. *Who enters the COSF information into the ITEIP Data Management System?*
   ITEIP prefers this to be the FRC. However, some local agencies assign entering information
   to another individual. Therefore, it should be the same individual who enters the IFSP into
   the system.

❖ **CONCERNING IMPLEMENTATION IN WASHINGTON**

1. *What are the timelines?*
   Statewide Training for implementation of the Child and Family Outcomes Measurement
   Process was held May 22-24, 2007. The COSF training was provided to communities around
   the state via three central locations. The implementation of the measurement process and
   reporting began July 1, 2007 to ensure Washington has the beginning baseline information to
   report by February 2008.

   Collection of all entry and exit summaries begins with paper versions of the COSF and
   should be maintained in children's files following the statewide training.

   The required electronic submission of the COSF process will be in place when the ITEIP
   data management upgrades are completed. The upgrades are currently in process and will be
   implemented as soon as possible. See chart following for scheduled activities.

   Child Outcome Data in ITEIP Data Management System schedule:

Deliverable	Start Date	Completion Date
Deliverable 1 – Project Initiation & Requirements	3/15/2007	5/15/2007
Deliverable 2 – System Architecture, UI Design & Prototype	4/2/2007	5/23/2007
Deliverable 3 – Application Development	5/23/2007	6/28/2007
Deliverable 4 – Code Freeze/Integration Testing	7/9/2007	8/1/2007
Deliverable 5– User Acceptance Testing	9/3/2007	9/13/2007
Deliverable 6 – Documentation	9/13/2007	9/25/2007
Deliverable 7 – Go Live	9/28/2007	10/1/2007
Use & Tune (October)	10/1/2007	10/31/2007
Use & Tune (November)	11/1/2007	11/30/2007
Use & Tune (December)	12/1/2007	12/31/2007
Project Complete		12/31/2007